

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the details of the action is being taken to ensure that no labourer is subjected to harassment especially on the basis of his ethnicity and religion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (c) A news-item had appeared in the Indian Express dated 27.09.2000 wherein harassment of migrant labour was reported on communal grounds in Bhatinda, Punjab. A report was called from SSP, Bhatinda and it has been indicated in the report that no harassment of labourers took place on the basis of their ethnicity or religion. Meetings have also been conducted by the District Administration with the labourers and the leaders to maintain peace and amity.

Comprehensive legislation for workers not covered under Social Security Schemes

4490. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the workers engaged in agriculture, construction, forest, home based industries and domestic servants are around 90 per cent of the total workforce and they are not covered under the Social Security Scheme like Provident Fund, ESI, Gratuity and Pension and they are also not covered under any other Labour Act; and

(b) if so, whether there is any specific proposal for bringing a comprehensive legislation for this section of workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR

AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) and (b) As per the 1997 estimates of National Sample Survey Organisation there were about 353.7 million workers out of which around 90% belonged to the unorganized sector including agriculture, construction, forests etc. Benefits of PF, pension and Deposit Linked Insurance as admissible under the EPF & MP Act have already been extended to the workers employed in certain unorganized sectors like beedi, building & Construction, poultry farms, agricultural farms, fruit gardens, cattle breeding, plantations, agarbatti, dhoop, kattha, coir making industry, brick industry etc. Workmen Compensation benefits are admissible to workers employed in construction/repair of any building, road, bridge, canal, loading and unloading of any vehicle, tapping of palm trees, plantations, horticultural operations, forestry, bee keeping, mechanized farming, spraying/dusting of insecticides/pesticides in agricultural operations, mechanized harvesting and threshing operations etc. The workers employed in slate pencil manufacturing establishments employing one or more persons are covered under the ESI Scheme. However labour laws are presently not applicable to domestic workers. Second National Commission on Labour set up by the Government to suggest rationalization of the existing labour laws have also been asked to suggest an umbrella legislation for ensuring minimum level of social protection to the workers in the unorganized sector.

Bill to ban contract labour

4491. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that a new Bill is being introduced in the Parliament to lift ban on contract labour;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;
- (c) whether a regulatory authority would be put in place so as to prevent misuse of the proposed legislation; and
- (d) by when the Bill is likely to be introduced in the Parliament?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (d) In the wake